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ABSTRACT

Reinforcing E.S.L. with Los Cumbancheros Choral Performance Group was a state-funded program functioning at seven elementary and junior high schools in the Bronx (New York) in 1992-93, its fifth year. the program served 244 Latino students primarily of limited English proficiency (LEP); a few English-proficient and special education students were also served. Participants performed in a variety of multicultural activities, 152 of them in a choral group and 92 in percussion groups. Spanish native language arts (NLA) and English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction were offered in music and music theory classes. Los Cumbancheros also provided staff development and parent involvement activities. The project was successful in meeting its objectives for ESL and NLA in music theory, and for Spanish and English oral language proficiency. It also met the objectives for staff development, cultural/education activities, and parental involvement. Recommendations for program improvement include providing additional staff to assist in collecting quantitative data and developing appropriate assessment tools to document student achievement. (Author/MSE)

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ED 371 610

OREA Report

Reinforcing E.S.L. with Los Cumbancheros Choral Performance Group (Los Cumbancheros)

1992-93

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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Reinforcing E.S.L. with Los Cumbancheros Choral Performance Group (Los Cumbancheros)

1992-93

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Reinforcing E.S.L. with Los Cumbancheros Choral Performance Group (Los Cumbancheros), funded by New York State Bilingual Categorical Funds for the fifth year, functioned at seven elementary and junior high schools in four Community School Districts (C.S.D.s) in the Bronx.

Los Cumbancheros served 244 Latino students who were primarily of limited English proficiency (LEP); a few English proficient (EP) and special education students were also served. Participants performed in a variety of multicultural activities, 152 of them in a choral group and 92 in percussion groups. Spanish Native Language Arts (N.L.A.) and English as a Second Language (E.S.L) instruction were offered in music and music theory classes. Los Cumbancheros also provided staff development and parental involvement activities.

The project was successful in meeting its objectives for E.S.L. and N.L.A. in music theory and for English and Spanish oral language proficiency. It also met the objectives for staff development, cultural/educational activities, and parental involvement.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendations to the project:

- If possible, provide additional staff to assist with collecting quantitative data.
- Develop appropriate assessment tools to document student achievement.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report was prepared by the Bilingual, Multicultural, and Early Childhood Evaluation unit of the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment.

Additional copies of this report are available from:

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I. INTRODUCTION

In 1992-93, Reinforcing E.S.L. with Los Cumbancheros Choral Performance Group (Los Cumbancheros) was in its fifth year of funding by New York State Categorical Funds.

PROJECT CONTEXT

The project operated at four intermediate and two elementary schools in four C.S.D.s in the Bronx. (See Table 1.) A few high schools serving former project participants who wanted to continue their participation in the program sent students to the project site most convenient for them.

The target students were Latinos from Puerto Rico, Honduras, Santo Domingo, Mexico, El Salvador, or Peru. Most students came from low-income families.

TABLE 1

Participating Sites and Students

School	C.S.D.	Grade Levels	Number of Participants
I.S. 139	7	6-8	23
P.S. 30	7	4-5	25
I.S. 52	8	6-8	47
P.S. 75	8	5	30
I.S. 115	10	7-8	49
I.S. 113	11	6-8	51
High School Component	N.A.	N.A.	19

The classrooms, rehearsal studios, and auditoriums where participants met were clean, attractive, and bright. Sheets of music and colorful posters of musical instruments decorated the walls.

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Los Cumbancheros served a total of 244 students. This was a substantial increase over the previous year's 218 students. Most were Spanish-speaking students of limited English proficiency (LEP), and a very few were English proficient (EP) or certified for special education. LEP status was determined by Language Assessment Battery (LAB) scores at or below the 40th percentile.

The majority of participants (over 95 percent) were born outside the United States. Many were from low-income families. The pre-program academic performance of the majority of students was well below grade level, and some were at risk of dropping out of school.

Needs Assessment

Before instituting the project, Los Cumbancheros conducted a needs assessment of the targeted students and their families as well as of the educational staff who were to serve them. The data obtained from these studies indicated three primary needs: (1) to provide LEP students with intensive English and native language instruction and support services to improve school performance; (2) to build self-esteem and increase motivation in students by offering E.S.L. instruction through music theory and performance; and (3) to provide parents with workshops to familiarize them with the educational system and project goals.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Student Objectives

- Eighty percent of LEP students will demonstrate understanding of basic music theory and concepts in E.S.L. as measured by the passing criterion on a pre/post teacher-developed instrument in basic theory of instruction.

- Eighty percent of the LEP students participating in the fifth project year will demonstrate an understanding of basic music theory and concepts in the native Spanish language by a passing criterion on a pre/post teacher-developed instrument in basic music theory instruction or as demonstrated by final course grades.

- Project staff and contact teachers will rate LEP students' oral language proficiency in English/Spanish in individual and group performances using a rating scale of satisfactory, unsatisfactory, and needs improvement as demonstrated on a project-developed checklist.

Staff Development Objectives

- By June 1993, a minimum of four bilingual/E.S.L. teachers will have received a minimum of five training sessions in methods to teach E.S.L. through music as demonstrated in student choral/percussion teaching sessions by project staff and in methods to manage and organize student performances and the learning of E.S.L. activities as measured by attendance sheets and the evaluation survey form developed by the New York City Public Schools Division of Bilingual Education.

Parental Involvement Objectives

- By June 1993 a minimum of twenty parents will have attended a minimum of four training workshops focused on improving home/instructional support in understanding basic music theory and learning lyrics in Spanish and English.

- Project participants and twenty parents will attend a minimum of four cultural/educational activities conducted by project staff and consultants in Spanish and English.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

During the 1992-1993 school year, Los Cumbancheros provided music instruction in Spanish and English to Latino elementary and intermediate school students in the Bronx. Los Cumbancheros aimed to teach music theory, improve participants' oral proficiency in both English and Spanish, provide regular staff development activities for bilingual and E.S.L. teachers, and involve parents and students in a program of public performances.

To meet its instructional goals, Los Cumbancheros used bilingual methodologies. Class sessions and rehearsals were scheduled on a regular basis to expand students' knowledge of music theory in English and Spanish and their performance capability. (See Appendix B for examples of class schedules.)

Over thirty concerts were offered throughout the Bronx, Manhattan, Westchester, Long Island, and upstate New York.

Materials, Methods, and Techniques

Classes and rehearsals were conducted in Spanish and English with an E.S.L. methodology. A wide array of strategies and techniques were used for instruction, including hands-on activities in music composition and notation. The program focused on teaching music theory but also provided some art, voice, and instrumental lessons. Student participation in class and a written test in music theory determined grades.

E.S.L. and Spanish N.L.A. instruction was supplemented by analyzing vocabulary and sentence structure of the lyrics of musical compositions. Through the

careful selection and review of all the music used, the project provided cultural enrichment for all students. (See Appendix A for a sample of songs and instructional materials.)

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

The project's staff consisted of a project director, a music teacher, a teacher/pianist, a paraprofessional/bassist, two music consultant percussionists, a consultant/arranger, and a secretary. All were bilingual. The project director had a master's degree in education and extensive experience in both bilingual education and music instruction. The music teacher, a pianist, had a master's degree in administration and supervision. Two of the three music consultants were percussionists, and the third was the group's music arranger. One had a bachelor's degree in music, another was a high school graduate who had attended music school, and the third consultant had a degree in applied science. The paraprofessional, a high school graduate, was a bassist. (See Appendix B for a complete list of project staff and their qualifications.)

Staff Development

Teachers of participating students participated in a series of monthly activities focused on N.L.A. and E.S.L. in a dual-language curriculum. Topics included linking cultural rhythms and sounds with peoples and languages, organization and preparation of performances, the role of solfège (sight reading) in developing discipline, and parent involvement.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The project rotated sites for monthly parent meetings. The meetings were predominately in Spanish since most parents could speak only a few words of English. Staff introduced the goals and objectives of Los Cumbancheros and discussed the various activities of their children. A small group of parents attended local performances regularly.

II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

An OREA consultant interviewed the project director to gather qualitative and quantitative data. School and project staff completed information about participants' backgrounds and program implementation. The project director furnished agendas, attendance sheets, and final grade rosters to assist OREA in evaluating student and staff objectives.

The project director met with OREA consultants a number of times to redesign teacher-developed instruments in basic music theory in English. The teacher-developed rating scale was inadequate to the task at hand; therefore, a Student Oral Proficiency Rating Scale (an adaptation of the Student Oral Language Observation Matrix [SOLOM] developed by the San Jose, California, Unified School District) was chosen to assess student oral language in the upcoming academic year.

OREA used course grades to evaluate E.S.L and N.L.A. music theory. Objectives for staff development, parent involvement, and cultural education activities were evaluated through project records. Although some objectives called for pre/post scores, no pretest data were collected.

To gather qualitative data, an OREA evaluation consultant carried out on-site and telephone interviews with the project director several times during the school year and also observed a full performance given by the project students.

III. FINDINGS

PARTICIPANTS' EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

Los Cumbancheros carried out all instructional activities specified in the original design. Throughout the school year, students had ample opportunity to develop their English and native language skills and learn music theory.

LEP Participants' Progress in English

The objective for English development was:

- Eighty percent of LEP students participating in the fifth project year will demonstrate understanding of basic music theory and concepts in English as their second language as measured by the passing criterion on a pre/post teacher-developed instrument in basic music theory instruction or as demonstrated by final course grades.

Of the 244 students for whom data were available, 233 (95 percent) received a passing grade.

Project met objective for E.S.L. music theory.

LEP Participants' Progress in Native Language

- Eighty percent of LEP students participating in the fifth project year will demonstrate an understanding of basic music theory and concepts in the native Spanish language by a passing criterion on a pre/post teacher developed instrument in basic music theory instruction or as demonstrated by final course grades.

The project director decided not to give the test in Spanish. Final course grades were used to determine a pass or fail.

Project met objective for N.L.A. music theory.

LEP Participants' Progress in Oral Language Proficiency

- Project staff and contact teachers will rate LEP students' oral language proficiency in English/Spanish in individual and group performances using a pre/post rating scale of satisfactory, needs improvement, and unsatisfactory as demonstrated on a project-developed checklist.

Of the 244 students for whom data were available, 232 (95 percent) were rated as satisfactory, four (two percent) as needing improvement, and seven (3.5 percent) as unsatisfactory in English oral proficiency. One hundred percent were rated as satisfactory in Spanish oral proficiency.

Project met the objective for rating English/Spanish oral language proficiency.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- By June 1993, a minimum of four bilingual/E.S.L. teachers will have received a minimum of five training sessions in methods to teach E.S.L. through music as demonstrated in student choral/percussion teaching sessions by project staff and in methods to manage and organize student performances and the learning of E.S.L. activities as measured by attendance sheets and the evaluation survey form developed by the New York City Public Schools Division of Bilingual Education.

The project held five training sessions attended by four or more bilingual/E.S.L. teachers, as attested to by project records.

Project met the staff development objective.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- By June 1993, a minimum of 20 project parents will have attended a minimum of four training workshops focused on improving home/instructional support in understanding basic music theory and learning lyrics in Spanish and English.

The project offered parents four workshops. The topics included the details of the monthly performances of Los Cumbancheros and the content of their children's music classes in preparation for the upcoming performances. All four of the workshops were attended by 20 or more parents.

Project met the parental involvement objective.

- Project participants and twenty parents will attend a minimum of four cultural/educational activities conducted by project staff and consultants in Spanish and English.

Almost all students attended the ten major performances of Los Cumbancheros. (See Appendix D for a calendar of performances.) Parent attendance at these performances varied: more than 80 parents attended one, over 30 parents attended another, but attendance was under 20 for the remaining eight performances. The objective calls for approximate numbers, however, and therefore this objective can be considered as met.

Project met objective for parent and student attendance at cultural/educational activities.

IV. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Los Cumbancheros successfully completed its programming for the year under review. Students participated in choral and percussion groups. In addition, dance performances were given at one school, and, at a second school, an art group designed settings for performances.

Participants and staff alike were enthusiastic about the project.

Los Cumbancheros was successful in meeting its objectives for E.S.L. and N.L.A. music theory, English and Spanish oral language proficiency, parental involvement, cultural/educational activities, and staff development.

The project director met with OREA consultants to reorganize the instruments and procedures for data collection for the upcoming year to insure a more accurate documentation of student achievement and reflect the unique benefits to self-esteem offered by Los Cumbancheros. The project director also planned to seek a change in the objectives of the program in an effort to make them more relevant.

MOST AND LEAST EFFECTIVE COMPONENTS

Highly effective components of Los Cumbancheros were the music theory instruction and the performances. Qualitative data, and the reports of observers and those involved in the program, attest to the strength shown in these areas.

The collection of quantitative data needed improvement. The project director and OREA consultants met to reorganize and improve the assessment methods and tools used by Los Cumbancheros for the year following the one under review.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS

- If possible, provide additional staff to assist with collecting quantitative data.

- Develop appropriate assessment tools to document student achievement.

APPENDIX A: LIST OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND SONGS

Instructional Materials

Let's Learn Music, Book I & II. Adelaide A. Hascall, Hayes School Publishing Co.
Rhythm, Time and Value, Elementary School Series. Spirit Duplicating Masters
Music Signs. Mary Lou Walker, Music Series
Music Notation. Spirit Duplicating Masters

Songs Featured in the Major Performances

Star Spangled Banner
America, America
New York State Mind
I Miss My Puerto Rico
What A Wonderful World
Quisqueya
El Cumbanchero
Don't Get Around Much Anymore

Percussion Solo Numbers

Take the "A" Train
Piel Canela
Killer Joe

APPENDIX B: DEGREES AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCIES OF STAFF

Project Director: Professional Diploma in Educational Administration and Supervision and M.S. in Education, with a specialization in reading

Teacher and Pianist: M.A. in Administration and Supervision

Paraprofessional and Bassist: H.S. Diploma

Music Consultant and Percussionist: B.A. in Music

Music Consultant and Percussionist: H.S. diploma and music school

Consultant and Arranger: A.A. in Applied Science

Secretary, Office Associate: A.A.S. in Early Childhood, Business School, Certificate in Basic Practical Office Skills

APPENDIX C: DAILY SCHEDULE

LOS CUMBANCHEROS' SCHEDULE				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Staff meets to plan lessons and Develop materials I.S.75 1:00-2:30	I.S. 115 9:15-10:45 I.S. 13 1:30-2:50	I.S. 113 9:00-10:50 I.S. 52 1:15-2:50	SAME AS TUESDAY	SAME AS WEDNESDAY

APPENDIX D: CALENDAR OF PERFORMANCES, BY SEMESTER

FALL 92	**SEPTEMBER**	**OCTOBER**
	Supreme Court, Centre Street	Albany Legislative Building Pregones Theater, Bronx
	NOVEMBER	**DECEMBER**
	Grand Hyatt Hotel, NYC Albany, NY (Principals' Institute) Daily News Building (WPIX) I.S. 139 Roosevelt H.S.	I.S. 113 (two performances) Lincoln Center New York State Regents Conference at Albany
SPRING 93	**FEBRUARY**	**MARCH**
	P.S. 30 Brotherhood Month I.S. 115 Dominican Independence Day	I.S. 115 Dominican Independence Day Hostos Community College Hispanic Task Force, Municipal Building, Centre Street Grand Hyatt Hotel, NYC Puerto Rican Bar Association
	APRIL	**MAY**
	P.S. 14 I.S. 113 I.S. 139	Alfred E. Smith H.S. Bronx Court House Carnegie Hall PREA (Puerto Rican Educators' Association) I.S. 184, PAC Conference
	JUNE	
	Manhattan Community College (two performances) Union Hall, Local 1199 P.S. 291 P.S. 62 Bronx High School of Science	